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Dr. Hanslick on the "Ring des Nibelungen."

The London *Musical World* says: "Hear further the great Viennese critic (Wagner's Bane, as Siegfried was Fafner's Bane) on the Bayreuth performances," and translates as follows:

"In my last letter, I endeavored to describe the character of the *Nibelungen* music, as well as the mental and physical worry of my stay at Bayreuth would allow. While still under the oppressive weight of what I have gone through, I must to-day say something about the total effect of the entire performance. Before pronouncing a final and conclusive opinion, I must wait till I am farther off as regards both time and place.

"The impression produced upon the public by Wagner's *Nibelungenring* was not due in a preponderating degree to the music; had it been so, we must have designated it as totally crushing, even after the first two evenings. The most brilliant quality possessed by Wagner is the varied nature of his powers. This variety enables him to work at one and the same time with the special talent of the musician, of the painter, of the librettist, and of the stage-manager, and to effect in the last three characters what he could never have done in the first alone. It is more especially the feeling for the picturesque in Wagner's fancy which is incessantly at work in the *Nibelungen*, and it is from this feeling that the first notion of many a scene appears to have sprung. If we examine the photographs of the scenes due to the highly poetic imagination of Joseph Hoffman, we are involuntarily struck by the idea that such pictures arose in Wagner's mind before anything else, and that the appropriate poetry and music followed in their wake. This is the case with the very first scene of the 'Prelude.' The Daughters of the Rhine singing and swimming about in that stream, and, for 132 bars, surrounded merely by the waves of the long-drawn out triad of E flat major, present a picture which we admire without being very strict about the music. This part of the performance went off very well at Bayreuth because the scene and the machinery for the swimmers, which was worked from below, were very successful. From this point the musical charm of the *Rheingold* rapidly falls, and, as the susceptibility of the hearer, held fast uninterruptedly for nearly three hours, dries up simultaneously with it, he leaves with a feeling of deadly monotony. As a whole, it is really on Wagner's unexampled authority alone that this *Rheingold* will be accepted, partly by blind and partly by pretended enthusiasm. The second drama, *Die Walküre*, commences in an unusually spirited manner with the entrance into Hunding's house of Siegmund, who is fleeing from his pursuers. For the wearisome length of the scene at table (Siegmund, Hunding, and Sieglinde) we feel gradually compensated during the love-duet between Siegmund and Sieglinde, in which the B flat major movement, 'Winterstürme weichen dem Wonne-monde,' comes in like the sunshine of which we have long been deprived. Here we bask at any rate in a ray of melodious and sustained song! Notwithstanding this, the first act of *Die Walküre*, which, judging by the score, we had regarded as the gem of the whole work, did not quite realize the hopes entertained of it. The blame must, perhaps, be partly attrib-

uted to the tenor, whose voice was insufficient and wanting in tenderness. With the second act an abyss of wearisomeness opens before us. The god Wotan enters. He first holds a long conversation with his wife, and then (turning to Brünnhilde) delivers an autobiographical address, which fills eight whole pages of the text-book. The narrative, in slow time, and utterly devoid of melody, encompasses us like a dreary and far-stretching ocean, on which a few miserable scraps of 'guiding motives' float toward us from the orchestra. Scenes like this remind one of a species of torture which was very popular in the Middle Ages, and which consisted in waking up with pin-pricks a prisoner utterly overcome by sleep. We heard even Wagnerites designate the second act as a misfortune for the work as a whole—a very unnecessary misfortune, since with two strokes of the pen the two scenes might be extirpated and scarcely missed by anyone. But *Die Walküre* generally is only connected by the loosest bond with the action of the other parts of the work. We learn nothing in it which we have not already heard in *Rheingold* about the fatal ring, while, for what comes afterwards, there is nothing of importance except the punishment and enchantment of Brünnhilde in the concluding scene. The third act rises musically to greater power and breadth. It first does so, thanks to the Walkyres, whose wild singing with, and irrespective of, each other, imparts an agreeable animation to what they do. The *Ride of the Walkyries* and the *Fire Charm* are known, from being performed at concerts, as two magnificent pieces of daring tone-painting. In my notices of them when they were so heard, I relied upon their connection with the other portions of the drama, and prophesied that they would prove much more effective on the stage than has appeared to be the case at Bayreuth. This may be explained on two grounds: in the first place, the 'mystic abyss' of the Bayreuth Theatre is very far from possessing the captivating brilliancy and spirit of an open concert-room orchestra, and the visitor does not hear the two pieces till towards the close of the opera, when he is tired and dulled by what has gone before.—We must not predict from the score the greater or less effect of Wagnerian operas and scenes on the stage. I was taught this by *Siegfried*, also, which I thought would be far less effective than *Die Walküre*, while the contrary proved true. In the very first act, a tone of freshness, something realistic, something natural and hearty, breathes through the work. It is true that this element degenerates considerably in the 'Schmiedelieder' into the coarseness of Hans Sachs's Cobbler-Song, and sacrifices half its effect to immoderate length, yet it stands out very refreshingly from the stilted style of the preceding evenings. But what can we say of the long scene between Wotan and the dwarf, Mime? Each gives the other three questions, and each of them answers his own three with the minuteness of a student well coached up previously to presenting himself for examination—the entire scene is simply superfluous. Indeed, we may be sure, immediately only the tip of Wotan's spear is visible, that we have half an hour of the most crushing wearisomeness guaranteed. Is this 'dread God,' who never knows what is necessary and never does what is right; who, in the first drama, has to yield to his domineering wife; in the second, to a stupid giant; and in the third to a bold youth—is this unctuous pedant to be venerated as a divine ideal 'by the German people?' Even in his absence, Wotan manages to embitter our exist-

ence. In the first act of the *Götterdämmerung*, Wagner is unable to find an opportunity of bringing him on the stage, so a new and superfluous personage, Waltraute, is introduced, to give Brünnhilde an endless account of Wotan's unsatisfactory condition and sorrowful frame of mind. The second act of *Siegfried* left upon me a more pleasing impression than anything else. It is here that the feeling of the 'Waving Wood' (Siegfried seated in the early dawn at the foot of a tree and listening to the song of the birds), is most deeply felt and most convincingly rendered. It is here that Wagner's virtuoso-like tone-painting celebrates its noblest triumph, because it works with more natural means, and is steeped in purely human feeling. Were it not for the eccentric and ludicrous scene with the singing dragon, which, wounded to the death by Siegfried, becomes sentimental, and, as though out of gratitude for the thrust, relates to the hero its biography—we might enjoy this act with unalloyed pleasure. In the third act, we have again to endure a long conversation between Wotan and Siegfried. The latter fortunately shivers the sleep-inducing spear of the divine watchman, and forces his way into the 'glowing blaze.' For Brünnhilde's awakening, Wagner finds the tenderest tones: the ensuing love scene, also, is at first sweet and full of fragrance, as far, at all events, as it can be under the 'system.' Unfortunately, its conclusion puts us out of temper by its smoking heat; it is the heat of an over-heated steam boiler. We are all acquainted with the excited gruntings, stutterings, and screamings of the latest creations of Wagner's muse at such fervent moments, on which the curtain falls 'very quickly.'

"The *Götterdämmerung* strikes us as being dramatically the most successful of all four pieces; we now move once more upon this earth of ours, among beings of flesh and blood. We see, unfolded before us, a real story, but the introduction of the 'drink of forgetfulness,' which affected us so painfully even in the perusal of the work, strikes us as more repulsive and unintelligible than ever. Though the music of *Götterdämmerung* is carried out with a degree of industry which might do credit to bees themselves, and with more care than the music of the preceding dramas, there is yet a marked falling off in it. The first three dramas struck us, it is true, as sterile and unnatural in their musical method, besides being partially forced and abstruse, yet there ran through them a warmer and more rapid current of blood, a more original vein of invention, pointing to an earlier period as the date of their origin. A peculiar kind of wearisomeness and fatigue stamps the *Götterdämmerung*, on the contrary, with something resembling the labored efforts of old age. Nothing grows and blossoms spontaneously; the new motives are utterly insignificant; and the musical demand is supplied mostly in mosaic fashion from the earlier leading motives. The first act, which plays quite two hours, oversteps the utmost limits of our patience, and what comes afterwards leaves behind it the remembrance of only two striking pieces: the characteristic funeral march over Siegfried's corpse, and the song of the Daughters of the Rhine, those musical redeeming angels of the *Nibelungenring*. There appears to me no doubt that Wagner's power of musical invention, the place of which no virtuosity can fill, is rapidly on the decline, and the winged expression of the 'Wagner-Dämmerung,' that flew from lip to lip here, contains a sorrowful truth.

"I have simply given in a few rapid touches the general impression produced by the four *Nibelungen* dramas; anything like a detailed analysis of so gigantic a work is, in the limited space at my disposal, quite out of the question. As I have said, we must abandon all idea of a purely musical impression. Wagner felt very well that the pleasure of listening, and listening to *such* music, was insufficient for so protracted a term of theatrical imprisonment; so he gave the public all sorts of things to look at. Never before in any opera has there been such an accumulation of scenic marvels. The most wonderful things which we have hitherto considered impossible, or of which, to speak more correctly, we never even thought, follow one another in the most rapid succession. Such are the Daughters of the Rhine swimming far down below the surface of the water; the Gods walking over the rainbow; the transformation of Alberich into a dragon and then into a toad; the dragon vomiting forth fire; the Fire-Charms; the Twilight of the Gods, etc. The poet has afforded the composer the widest scope for the latter's virtuosity as a tone-painter. But should it be a dramatic composer's highest ambition to write music for a quantity of fairy machinery? Karl Lemcke, one of Wagner's avowed partisans, laments, in his very favorable notice of the *Nibelungenring*, the injurious influence of these 'conjuring tricks, with a flavor of Rosco's Hall of Magic about them,' which simply lead to our 'elevating into a religion our worship of the *fairy force*.' Indeed Wagner's *Nibelungenring* resembles works of this class far more than ought else. His material effects form a strange contrast to the pure idealism for which, as he boasts, his work is distinguished. He is invariably striving to produce the strongest possible effect upon the senses by all the means in his power. Even before the curtain rises, the mysterious heaving and surging of the invisible orchestra is intended to affect the hearer as a slight indulgence in opium eating would affect him—and, when the curtain is raised, but ere a single one of the characters opens his lips, we are under the continuous charm of a magically-lighted fairy-like scene; in the numerous night scenes, a vivid electric light illuminates the forms of the principal personages, and colored clouds of steam wave hither and thither, now rolled up together and now dispersed about the stage. These clouds of steam, which in *Rheingold* actually supply the place of the curtain between the acts, constitute one of the mightiest weapons in Wagner's new dramatic arsenal. As a formless and fantastical element calculated to entrap the senses the uprising steam agrees especially well with Wagner's musical principle. He himself compares the music which is heard from his invisible orchestra to the 'explosions rising under the seat of the Pythoness,' since 'they throw the hearer into an enthusiastic state of clairvoyance!' From this there is but one step to the introduction on the stage of particular scents and odors—they are recognized by physiology as being particularly effective in working upon and strengthening our feelings. We speak quite seriously. Who does not know, from our nursery tales, that fairies are surrounded by a sweet perfume of roses, while the Devil regularly leaves a smell of brimstone behind him? The principle of making all the agents which work upon our feelings co-operate in strengthening certain emotions, and certain things represented, ought also to employ our olfactory nerves for the purpose of exciting our participation in the joy and sorrow of the personages of the drama. Wagner has laid under contribution all the modern discoveries in the application of science; with amazement did we see the gigantic machinery, the gas apparatus, and the steam engines upon and under the Bayreuth stage. Wagner's *Nibelungen* could no more have been composed before the invention of the electric light than without the harp and bass-tuba. Thus it is the coloring, in the widest acceptance of the term, which, in Wagner's latest work, covers the meagre design and

usurps unexampled independence. The analogy between Wagner as a musician, Makart as a painter, and Hamerling as a poet, is self-evident. It is by its ensnaring influences over our senses that this music acts so powerfully as a direct nervous irritant upon the great mass of the public, especially on the female portion of it. The share of the professional musician is his interest in the high-pressure technical employment of the orchestra and in listening with strained attention to find out how it is all 'done.' We consider neither the one nor the other of trifling importance, but neither should preponderate overwhelmingly. Neither the professional greediness of the chapelmaster nor the hashish dream of the fair enthusiast constitute the be-all and the end-all of a tone-poem; both are conceivable, and often actually present without the soul of music.

"But with whatever hopes or fears people might have wandered to Bayreuth, all were united in the conviction that we were about to witness an extraordinary event in a theatrical sense. Even this expectation, however, was very imperfectly fulfilled. We have duly acknowledged Wagner's sensible arrangement of the front of the house, and, also, in connection with the machinery, the scene of the swimming Rhine-Nymphs in the Prelude. From this point, however, everything gradually fell off. That there was a hitch at the very first change of scene, and that everything stuck, is a fact on which we will not lay too much stress, for it may happen in any theatre, though it would have been preferable for it not to happen in this 'Model Performance' at Bayreuth, a performance which had been in preparation and trumpeted up for heaven knows how long. However, there were instances of absolutely wrong and defective scenery, and that at the most important points. The rainbow over which the Gods walked to the Walhalla was placed so low as to be taken for a painted rustic bridge. Siegmund's combat with Hunding, and Wotan's share in it, in the *Walküre*, took place in such darkness and so much at the back of the stage that not a soul among the audience had a suspicion of so all-important an event. So far from appearing on horseback, the Walkyres simply passed along the horizon in a series of very clumsy and indistinct 'dissolving views,' like the Wild Hunt in *Der Freischütz*. In Munich there were young grooms, dressed as Walkyres, who leaped backwards and forwards on thick carpets; their riding, of ghost-like speed and accompanied by no sound, was incalculably effective. What a paltry Court Theatre can do should surely be within the capabilities of the Model Theatre at Bayreuth. The wall of fire which ought to have encompassed Brünnhilde on all sides, blazed at Bayreuth only behind her, leaving the fair sleeper on three sides perfectly free and accessible. How that, also, ought to be done the Munich Operahouse showed us long ago. We pass over the ridiculous goats yoked to the carriage of the Goddess Fricka, and the poor, wretchedly weak old horse, not ridden by Brünnhilde, but led by the bride and held fast by a strap passing under the stage, as well as the many failures in the lighting department; we will merely mention the concluding scene in the *Götterdämmerung*, where the scenic art of the Wagner Theatre ought to have done, and intended to do, its best. Who did not look forward with delight to the moment when Brünnhilde, according to the express assurance of the text-book, 'vaults wildly upon the steed and at one bound dashes into the burning funeral pile?' Instead of this, Brünnhilde calmly leads her miserable Rosinante behind the scenes and never thinks of doing aught in either the 'vaulting' or 'dashing' line. The bold Hagen, too, who should 'fling himself as though frantic into the stream,' walks out at the right wing and two or three moments elapse before we behold him in the Rhine. The said Rhine, finally, which, 'tremendously swollen, rolls its waves into the very hall,' wobbled with its badly painted waves, evident-

ly sewn together at the top, like the Red Sea at a country performance of Rossini's *Mosè*. If in leading scenes like these the performance does not and cannot realize the express directions which Wagner gives in the text-book, and what Wagner promises the public, there cannot possibly be any further question of a 'Model Performance.' By far the most successful portion of the whole exhibition were the scenes, as picturesque as original, by Joseph Hoffmann: had they been faithfully worked and lighted in a more suitable manner, they would probably have produced a greater effect even than they did produce. The scene-painter holds only half the effect in his hand; the other half depends upon the art displayed in lighting, an art which resembles the scoring of a musical thought. This second half was not complete at Bayreuth, and Hoffmann's ideas appeared in the photographs more melodiously conceived than they actually sounded in the Festival Playhouse.

"With regard to the musical execution, the greatest share of praise is due to the conductor, Hans Richter, and Mad. Materna, who sang the part of Brünnhilde. We ought to feel pleased that three of the most eminent artists—Richter, Hoffmann, and Mad. Materna—come from Vienna. With regard to the orchestra, we must extol not only its admirable performance, but also the super-human self-abnegation with which, shut out from light and air, and without coming in contact either with the stage or the spectators, its members did their work as cellarmen. The first violin was played by that renowned and well-proved artist, A. Wilhelmj; the instrument itself from which he obtained such dulcet sounds he vaunted to us as the production of our Vienna instrument-maker, Zach. Over all her fair colleagues towered Mad. Materna. A born Brünnhilde by vocal power and figure, she gave proof of having made wonderful progress in a dramatic as well as every other respect. May she return to us from this murderous campaign with her voice uninjured! The concerted singing of the three Daughters of the Rhine was excellent; Mad. Jalde was very admirable in the small part of Erda; insignificant the representative of Sieglinde; and utterly insufficient the representative of Gutrun. On the whole, the gentlemen distinguished themselves more than the ladies. This is especially true of Herren Vogel (Loge); Schlosser (Mime); Niemann (Siegmund); Betz (Wotan); Hill (Alberich); and Reichenberg (Fafner).

"That the great majority of the Bayreuth pilgrims broke out, after each of the four dramas, into rapturous applause was a matter of course; it was with that intention they had come. The conviction which I expressed in my first notice, that the vitality and effect of Wagner's latest work must be proved in other theatres, remains unchanged. Doubts, however, may be entertained whether, after the impression produced by the Bayreuth Festival performances, our managers will evince any particularly lively solicitude to undertake the trouble and the expense of so costly an experiment."

And this (says the Translator) is the general impression produced upon a most competent and unprejudiced judge by the Model Performances of which we had heard so much, and from which we were taught to expect even more! Another example of the truth contained in Horace's well-known, and oft misquoted line:—

"Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus."
N. V. N.

What is English Opera?

Now that the Carl-Rosa Campaign is at its height, it may not be unprofitable for us to review the oft-mooted subject of English Opera, and ask what progress has been effected in this department of musical art during late years.

In the first place, we are bound to ask, what is English Opera? The numerous experiments in this direction, from the celebrated Pyne and Harrison venture downwards, have so far failed in at least one, and that the most important respect—the establishment of a *bona fide* and distinct English school of musical drama. If we glance at Mr. Carl Rosa's past and present repertoires, we shall find that, with a few exceptions, the works he presents are Italian and French operas "done" into English. He might as well put a troupe of foreigners on the stage, all speaking our language with a very bad accent, and call it English drama. It is impossible that anomalies of such sort can ever obtain a permanent hold on our public, who would much rather hear Italian airs sung by Italians, and to their original libretti. Even if we look at the most successful English operas—that is, operas composed by English writers to English words—we shall see that they are purely Italian alike in general structure and in detail. The fact is that the class of musical composition which we are accustomed to distinguish as opera, or operatic, is essentially un-English in character. The dramatic action and forms of expression to which operatic music is by long association inseparably wedded, can in no way be brought to accord with the more phlegmatic and reticent character of the Teutonic mind. The ecstatic love-making, the rhapsodical monologues, the tragic recrimination scenes, the—to our eyes—exaggerated speech and gestures, which make up the material of what is known as "opera," are so entirely foreign to our mode of thought and life, that when they are brought home to us in our own tongue, a sense of the ridiculous at the same time intrudes itself, though sorely, it may be, against our will. With our Italian friends, however, the opposite of this is the case. Naturally excitable in temperament and voluble in speech, their musical drama is a true—though poetic—reproduction of their every day life. When they greet each other as old friends, instead of the English handshake, they rush at each other in an ardent embrace. When they make love, it would come very naturally to them to do their wooing in an improvised aria, sung on bended knee, just as we see them upon their own stage. The discussion of the most trivial subjects will put them in a state of seeming frenzy. When, therefore, they see and hear Italian opera, they view a tolerably faithful picture of things as ordinarily presented to their minds. They see their own thoughts, emotions, and lives, just tinted with the slightest pink glow of romance, and all their sympathies go forth to such a representation; indeed no other form of musical drama would attract them, or be regarded by them as legitimate or real. Now the converse of all this is applicable to our own race; and our Teutonic brethren in Germany, always in advance of us in the respect of musical art, are beginning to be dissatisfied with the old formule, hitherto accepted because there has been nothing better to take their place. Into the art theories of Richard Wagner we cannot now enter, but the recent demonstrations at Bayreuth are in fact significant of the growing desire, amongst Germans in particular, for some form of musical drama more suited to their own sympathies and temperament. Whether Wagner has found the form which will satisfy this want is a question which time alone can fully answer. In the meantime, Italians, and others who have been brought up in the old traditions, cry out that this new thing is not opera at all. But, indeed, it is only a battling for terms. The word "opera" has been and is so intimately associated with the Italian form, that it is difficult, and perhaps scarcely worth while to disavow the tie. Give the Teutonic requirement a new name, and the atmosphere of this wordy war will at once become clearer. What we really want is a species of musical drama which will suit the German or English mind in the same manner as "the opera" suits the Italians or French. If we regard our own national music, we are as far off from the desired goal as ever. The so-called "English Opera," to which we are sometimes treated, is nothing more than Italian opera disguised, and if people go to hear it, it is because there is nothing better for them to hear.

But further, looking at the essentially non-dramatic cast of the English mind, we are tempted to ask, is a popular English music-drama possible? The truth is, we are eminently a song or "ballad" loving nation, and the old "Ballad Operas" derived their one-time popularity from this fact. For the same reason, disjoint arias from the Italian operas, if they are sufficiently "taking," are warmly received at the same time that their dramatic connection is totally ignored. English people go to hear

Italian opera because of the *solis* of a Patti or a Titiens. They care little for the rest of the work, beyond, perhaps, the *mise-en-scene*; and an Italian opera without "stars" would be simply intolerable to them. On the other hand the cantata or oratorio form is far more popular with our own countrymen than it is with the Italians or French. England has been the special home of oratorio ever since the days of Handel. An oratorio is nothing more than a collection of songs and choruses, more or less connected by a certain relativity of subject. English people are content to take their music, as they take their other pleasures—"sadly," or to be more correct, quietly. Not that they are less fond of fun and humor than other nations; they can enjoy to the full an opera bouffe, where indeed extravagant speech and violent action serve to enhance the sense of incongruity which attends upon the enjoyment of wit and humor. The never-failing audiences at the Christy's or German Reed's point to the possibility of a genuine English comic opera. But with respect to the more important and dignified form of musical drama, we have some misgivings. The English are not a "dramatic" race, even while they may be called a play-going people. Good acting is far rarer on the average English stage than on continental boards. Looking at opera in the same light in which the Italians or French are able to regard it, as a drama beautified by music, it falls in any appeal to the closest sympathies of our nature. While the actual music interests us, we incline to forget the story, or if at times we think of both we are apt to become disconcerted. To our minds it partakes of the ludicrous when the hero of a story takes to singing an elaborate aria in the midst of his death throes. In short, a tragedy set to music is a thing beyond our comprehension.

This is a subject to which the attention of English musicians cannot be too strongly directed. That the *soi-disant* "English Opera" is a failure from the highest point of view, few will gainsay. We should like to hear the views of other thinkers upon the subject; it is possible that after all some way may be found out of our present difficulty.—*London Musical Standard.*

Bellini's Remains.

At eleven o'clock in the forenoon of Friday the 15th inst., the mortal remains of Bellini were officially delivered up to the members of the Committee, despatched by the town of Catania, to carry them back to the composer's birthplace. Père-Lachaise was not crowded. Only a few invitations had been issued, as the Committee had not been long in Paris. There were two or three hundred persons present, among them being the Prefect of the Seine, the Prefect of Police, MM. Vaucorbell, Perrin, Carvalho, L. Escudier, Muzio, J. Barbier, G. Gottrau, Léon and Ludovic Halévy, Joncières—the only French composer who thought it worth while to attend, and he is a journalist and critic as well as a musician—Delahaye and Rätz, representing the Opera and the Conservatory, respectively, a few members of the Press, and a certain number of Italians resident in Paris; outside the cemetery, however, some two or three thousand sight-seers had collected.

The first thing to be done was to verify the identity of the body. Though the latter was embalmed, the features of the Deceased had in forty-one years become irre recognizable, and the ceremony of verification was a mere legal form. When it had been gone through, the coffin was closed and placed in a magnificent outer coffin of cedar-wood, covered with red velvet, and ornamented with an inscription, a cross and four handles, the cross and handles being of massive silver. After the usual prayers, the Marquis di San Giuliano, who spoke in French, delivered an address thanking France for the way in which she received Bellini in 1835. Signori Curro and Ardizzone then made speeches in Italian to the same effect. MM. Escudier, Grimaldi, and Michel Masson (the last representing the Society of Dramatic Authors and Composers) pronounced a few touching words, which found an echo in the hearts of those around, among whom was remarked, weeping bitterly, Bellini's old friend, Sig. Francesco Florimo. The tomb, henceforth empty, has borne since the 15th inst., a second inscription referring to the ceremony which took place on that day. It runs thus:—"Catania, Grata alla Francia, Nel richiamare, le Ceneri illustri, Questa Lapide pose, 15 Settembre, 1876" ("Catania, Grateful to France, When recalling the illustrious Ashes, Placed this Stone, The 15th September, 1876.") By noon everything was over, and the Catanian Committee left

with their precious charge for Italy. The Italian papers state that the Municipality of Catania have had a gold medal struck for presentation to the City of Paris. On one side is the portrait of Bellini, and, on the other, the inscription:—"A Parigi, per le restituite Ceneri, Catania riconoscente" ("To Paris, Catania, grateful for the restitution of the ashes of Bellini.")—*La Gazette Musicale.*

Hereford Festival.

The unusual success of this week's Festival proves that "the meeting of the Three Choirs," the oldest musical institution in England, if not in Europe, still flourishes both root and branch.

Certainty was felt by all who came that the feast of harmony would be abundant and excellent, for the conductor and manager was none other than the able and oft-tried musician, Mr. Townshend Smith, who had framed a capital programme, and engaged an orchestra, comprising renowned singers, a fine band, led by the gifted Sainton, and a powerful chorus; forming an *ensemble* capable to cope with any difficulty, and afford gratification to every listener. The quality of the band was early demonstrated, in the overture to *Elijah*, given on Tuesday morning. The double basses led off the mysterious and weird-like subject, treated by the composer in fugal form; the other strings, each in turn, taking up and increasing the intensity of the theme, until the united orchestra told, with marvellous voice, the horrors of impending famine. All doubts of the band's proportions, balance, and unity of pitch were instantly set at rest. The chorus also proved its efficiency and good qualities; considering the number of voices, the effect was magical, and convinced me that vocal tones are more favored by the acoustic properties of the building than those from instruments. The solo soprano parts were judiciously apportioned, Mdme. Wynne delivering the strains of the broken-hearted widow with fervor of soul, and Mdle. Tietjens declaiming the angelic appeal, "Hear ye, Israel," with majesty of voice. Mr. Cummings was doubly successful—in his own part, and that allotted to Mr. Sims Reeves, absent through indisposition. Miss Enriquez and Mdme. Trebelli divided the contralto music; the accomplished English lady giving the air, "Woe unto him" with tender sentiment and suavity of voice; the French songstress exciting the listener to admiration by dramatic force. Consideration at all times should be shown to him who undertakes the rôle of the Prophet. I can never withhold sympathy from one charged with the most onerous and laborious task found in any oratorio. Not only does it try to the utmost his physical power and endurance, but it also makes exhaustive demands upon his mental resources. Mr. Maybrick, the *Elijah* of this Festival, has several pleas to put forward to claim the right of a hearing as the representative of the Prophet. Amongst them are a commanding figure, sentiment, compass of voice, and musical knowledge. These qualities enabled him to sing all the music accurately, and the delicate portions feelingly, but it must be confessed the rugged grandeur of the character was not made manifest.

Selections from *Samson* and the first part of the *Creation* were performed in the Cathedral on Tuesday evening, when the glorious fabric was invested with a fresh charm. Blank and dark were the walls, by day relieved and illumined by

"—storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light."

Lurid glares of gas fell upon the stately pillars, and pierced through gloom to the far-off roof; giving a weird-like appearance to nave and aisle, and producing an effect on those present not uncongential to that experienced in listening to the strains of the *Creation*. Strange to say, Handel's music did not go well. The chorus singers were careless, and some of the soloists fatigued. Not so Mr. Cummings, although he had again to do double duty.

Wednesday morning was devoted to the *Last Judgment* and *Hymn of Praise*. Spohr's *chef-d'œuvre* has gradually fixed itself as a standard work at the Festivals of the Three Choirs. It has done so in spite of coldness, gibes, and sneer. Why has it endured? Because it is adapted to the church; its subject and mode of treatment are alike appropriate to the sacred place. It moves the listener to contemplation of a subject the most awful in import through the emotions of the heart. Instead of terrifying by lightnings and thunders, it leads the soul to hearken to the gentle voice of the Redeemer and the songs of the redeemed. Under its influence the

weary one of earth feels rest is nigh; the sin-stricken is assured of grace; the bereaved finds comfort; tears are wiped from streaming eyes; and sorrow gives place to holy joy. The strains of "Blessed are the departed" fall on the ear as if they were whisperings of comforting assurance from dear ones passed into the happier land. The performance was excellent. The quartet of English vocalists, M^{me}. Wynne, Miss Enriquez, Messrs. Cummings and Lewis Thomas, could scarcely be improved upon; and the band and chorus were admirable. The *Hymn of Praise* formed a delightful sequel to Spohr's work. The symphony was played grandly, and proved the most engaging occupation for the instrumentalists, and the highest test of their ability. M^{lle}. Tietjens and M^{me}. Trebelli sang splendidly. Mr. Sims Reeves was announced, but Mr. Cummings again acted as deputy. Mr. Reeves's illnesses prove a wide-spread calamity, for those deprived of hearing him share his misfortunes. He demands sympathy from all. The committee telegraphed Mr. Lloyd, who was from home. Mr. Rigby was known to be in Italy; but why did they not seek assistance from Mr. Montem Smith? He has claims upon them; his connection with the management, his former services, and present capacities should have induced the committee to have sought his aid. Mr. Cummings, however, proved equal to the ordeal of working a Festival single handed. None could doubt his skill and knowledge, but his fragile figure and delicate appearance may give impressions of unequal strength. In the end, however, the fearful were convinced that he has above all things staying power.

On Thursday morning Mr. J. F. Barnett's oratorio, *The Raising of Lazarus*, was performed. It was the novelty of the Festival. Everything that proceeds from this young composer's pen commands attention and respect. He has pursued the study of his art with an industry and assiduity unhappily rare. As a consequence, nothing in his writings is found hurried and crude. Instead of being satisfied with ideas as they start from an imperfectly trained mind, he patiently aims to present them in the forms of the great masters. In Mr. Barnett's melodies a striving for beauty is always perceptible, and often reached; his choruses are generally built up with contrapuntal art, and his instrumentation manifests a knowledge and command of scoring in all the fulness of modern development. These qualities are seen in every page of *The Raising of Lazarus*, and prove its author to be an able and practised musician. The composer has suffered from the usual calamity—he has been unfortunate in his libretto, which seems to be a prosy commentary upon the miraculous events rather than a clearly told narrative. Much of his finest music is devoted to subjects which have no appropriate application to the wondrous story; appearing, in consequence, more like a string of separate anthems than parts of a whole. Unity is thereby utterly sacrificed. Whether we do or do not agree with Wagner's dictum, that music should be subordinated to poetry, certain it is that in the book of any drama, sacred or secular, the parts should be subservient to the whole; nothing should be inserted that stops the action, or impedes the progress of the story. This looseness and disjointedness in Mr. Barnett's libretto have reflected evils upon his music. It is often diffuse. Has he not followed his models too slavishly? Imitation is praiseworthy in a student or workman, but not in a master. Wagner, by some, is deemed an iconoclast. God forbid he should break the glorious images left us by the great masters; but if he could destroy the moulds taken from them, in which composers cast their thoughts, he would do the world a service. The oratorio was executed with zeal and ability. M^{lle}. Tietjens, M^{me}. Trebelli, Mr. Cummings, and Mr. Lewis Thomas sang to perfection their several parts, and the band and chorus honored the composer, who conducted, with their closest attention and heartiest efforts.

Gounod's Mass followed. Having often admired it in the concert-room, I was disappointed in finding it somewhat feeble in the cathedral. Its picturesque coloring scarcely made up for its want of solidity and grandeur. How different was it with Beethoven's "Hallelujah" from the *Mount of Olives*! The bursting forth of its wondrous strains seemed to shake the building.

The evening concerts at the Shire Hall have begun to take a subordinate position at the Festivals of the Three Choirs. Will they give place to cathedral performances? Until they do, Mr. Townshend Smith is too good a musician to allow them to pass without their teaching something sound and classic.

He selected Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony and Mozart's "Jupiter" for the edification of the people, who received them with acclamations. The only instrumental solo given was by M. Sainton, a man and an artist *sans reproche*. The band on this occasion was conducted by his friend and old pupil, Mr. Weist Hill. Mr. Sims Reeves's absence was very much felt, although the numbers allotted him in the programme were taken by M^{lle}. Tietjens and M^{me}. Trebelli. The ladies undertook the task at a sacrifice of effect; for, as Mr. Reeves's songs were placed either before or after their own, they had to sing too consecutively for their own comfort and the appreciation of the audience. M^{me}. Edith Wynne delighted all with her charming ballad singing. The voice of Miss Enriquez suffered not in comparison with any. Miss Bertha Griffiths pleased by her agreeable singing and unaffected manner. Mr. Lewis Thomas sang a new song by W. H. Thomas, called "Homelight." Mr. Maybrick found the concert-room less strange and exacting than the Cathedral. When Mr. Cummings appeared, on Thursday night, to sing "Tom Bowling," he was greeted with cheers for his immense exertions during the week. Subsequently he received a letter of thanks from the committee, enclosing a cheque of fifty guineas for his extra services. Bravo, Cummings!

An immense audience, rather, I would say, congregation, assembled on Friday morning to hear the *Messiah*. All concerned treated it as an act of worship.

Mr. Townshend Smith conducted through the week capably, leading his people as much by his genial smile as the "stick." Mr. Done, of Worcester, did good and unostentatious work at the organ, and Mr. Lloyd, the newly elected organist of Gloucester, commenced with ability his Festival duties, for which I wish him many years of health and strength.—*Lond. Mus. World*.

PENCKROD GWFFYN.

Hereford, September 16th.

The Late Dr. Rimbault.

The death of Edward Francis Rimbault, LL.D., announced in last week's *Athenaeum*, leaves a void not only in the musical world, but also in a considerable literary circle, and it is such a void as cannot readily be filled up. Dr. Rimbault died in his own house, 29, St. Mark's Crescent, Regent's Park, on the morning of the 26th of September, and was buried on the 30th, in Highgate Cemetery. He had completed his sixtieth year on the preceding 13th of June.

The special knowledge which Dr. Rimbault possessed, and in which he was, perhaps, unrivalled, was twofold: first, as to all that related to Early English music, including the history of the art and of its professors, from the commencement of the sixteenth century to the end of the last; and, secondly, as to the contents of Early English printed books, any, or all, of which he would read whenever he could find them, for the chance of gleanings some forgotten information and taking note of it. No sooner had he acquired new evidence upon any contested point, upon biographical details, or upon any forgotten subject, than he would place it at the service of his literary friends, with a liberality which is not often paralleled. Indeed, his readiness to oblige was not limited to personal friends, for he was also ready to impart his peculiar information to any literary inquirer; and it is not much to say that a considerable number of books upon antiquarian subjects by various authors were greatly improved by his advice and assistance. His own researches were commenced when only in his teens, and were so well known to others that at the age of twenty-four he was requested to accept the secretaryship of the Percy and of the Musical Antiquarian Societies, the former for the reprinting of Early English poetry and popular literature, and the latter for Early English musical compositions. For these two societies, which both endured for about eleven years, Dr. Rimbault edited fourteen works. Subsequently he accepted a place on the Council of the Handel Society; and, later still, on that of the Camden Society, which alone survives. For the Handel Society he edited three oratorios, and for the Camden two works. He was the factotum of the Motet Society, and edited Marbeck's *Book of Common Prayer* (date of Edward VI.), and numerous collections of anthems, chants, etc., for publishers. On the literary side, he edited the works of Sir Thomas Overbury, the Hon. Roger North's *Memoirs of Musick*, and many more. It is unnecessary to recapitulate them, as the list up to 1860

was supplied to M. Fétis, and may be found in his *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*. It was the love of his special subjects which induced Dr. Rimbault to edit such works, and to give his time to a most careful series of biographical and bibliographical notes which accompany them. The remuneration for an editor rarely exceeded that of the twelve to twenty-five copies which a society gives, and which the editor distributes among his friends. The money to buy so valuable a collection of books as Dr. Rimbault possessed was supplied, first, by a kind godfather, and, secondly, by his professional earnings. The latter were limited, on account of the great share of time which he devoted to literature. He was habitually abstemious, and his only luxuries were old books, and now and then an old carved bookcase, or a bit of old stained glass. Such was the man. It is probable that this famous library will now be dispersed, for lack of the master mind, and the consequent decline of a modest income.

W. CHAPPELL.

Musical Pitch.

Mr. Sims Reeves has addressed the subjoined letter to the *Athenaeum* :—

Grange Mount, Beulah Spa, Upper Norwood.

It is very painful to me to be dragged into something like a public controversy by the personal remarks of your musical critic, as to my being "the main cause of an agitation that has led only to confusion and discord," etc. No reform of standing abuses can be effected without a certain measure of debate. There are always opposing influences that must be overcome, and temporary strife may be well purchased by the final advance of the true interests of art. Uniformity, this gentleman assures us, can only be secured by legislative enactment, as in France. This may be so; but, though we are a law abiding people, we do not fly to a central authority on all occasions, and I almost fear that musical art is not yet quite sufficiently valued in this country for a legislative enactment of such a kind to be within the range of immediate probabilities. We must, then, as individuals, do what we can and may, and I, for one, am willing to incur the charge of interested motives, which your musical critic, not very graciously perhaps, urges against me, if thereby I can promote the cause of art and benefit my admirable fellow artists, both English and foreign. And now to answer the allegations urged against me as briefly as possible.

1. I really cannot take upon myself the credit for the reduction of the organ pitch at Birmingham, because it is notorious that this was an absolute necessity (and letters in my possession from the managers prove it), in order to conform the pitch to the reduced one at Drury Lane.

2. I can undertake to prove, if need be, by the works in my possession, that the pitch in Italy and in Germany has never been so high as that of Sir Michael Costa. I may venture in this connection that my esteemed friend, Herr Joachim, plays on a different violin in Germany, with thicker strings. Here he brings one with thinner strings, to suit the abnormal pitch. This one fact would be conclusive as to the continental usage in the eyes of unprejudiced inquirers.

3. If an unreasonable pitch was persisted on to the eleventh hour, and a sudden change then carried out, and disasters evoked at Birmingham, as your contributor alleges, I can surely in no sense be held responsible. The chief artists at Drury Lane had previously forced a reasonable reduction of the pitch on Sir Michael Costa. If this reform had been steadily adhered to, there could have been no confusion and no disasters at Birmingham or elsewhere.

4. I declare unequivocally, and for the twentieth time, that I only ask for the pitch of Donzelli, David, Duprez, and Nourrit. I most entirely concur with that great composer, Mendelssohn, that to transpose this in oratorios is highly objectionable. I am convinced that Handel, Mendelssohn, and all other masters, felt the color, as it were, of the keys they wrote and write in. Hence I am always unwilling to transpose, and that is just why I wished to secure the normal pitch, which will render transposing unnecessary.

5. With respect to those great artists, M^{me}. Patti and M^{me}. Nilsson, it is wholly unnecessary for me to vindicate their course of action, and I cannot but express my surprise at the liberty of comment which your musical critic has allowed himself, with regard to the latter artist more especially.

Unpleasant personalities are surely out of place in the discussion of a public interest, where private likes and dislikes should be wholly set aside. I need only further observe that the pitch at Hereford was tuned to that accepted now both at Covent Garden and Drury Lane.

I have no delusion on the subject of pitch. Uniformity is doubtless most desirable, but it must not be uniformity in that which is abnormal and extraordinary. The pertinacity of my old friend, Sir Michael Costa, has alone so long retarded this essential reform, which, however, may now be said to have carried the day, finally. To the very personal concluding remarks of your contributor, I have only to reply that I am quite willing to accept his assurance of good will, and to recognize his past assertions that I am necessarily the chief loser by my inability at times to fulfil my engagements, whether to directors or to the public. Nobody can regret, need I say, as deeply as I do, the practical extinction of voice from which I sometimes suffer; the kind and art-loving public will understand, I am sure, that I have made great pecuniary sacrifices because I did not like to take pay for services which I could not discharge so as to do justice to the music I was called on to perform. Personal explanations are always painful things; to me, I may say, peculiarly so. It is certain that I never disappoint the public with out being far more grievously disappointed myself; but our frequent changes of temperature are most trying, and no care or caution can guarantee me against occasional attacks which prohibit me for a season to leave the house, and yield my public services to that art which it is the highest ambition of my soul to forward by all the legitimate means within my reach.

J. SIMS REEVES.

Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" at the London Lyceum.

(From the "Academy.")

By the production of an English version of *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Lyceum Theatre, last Tuesday evening, Mr. Carl Rosa has fulfilled what is in many respects the most important of the promises of his prospectus. The work had, it is true, been previously heard in England. It was brought out in 1870 at Her Majesty's Opera, under the management of Mr. Wood, but it was only played two or three times, at the close of a season, and has not been since repeated. There is, moreover, at the present time, so much more general knowledge on the subject of Wagner, and so much greater interest felt in his music than was the case six years ago, that I was by no means surprised to learn, on arriving at the theatre, that there was not a seat to be had in any part of the house.

The story of the "Flying Dutchman" is so generally familiar that it will be needless to dwell upon it in any detail. Suffice it to say that the three acts of the opera, as laid out by Wagner, show us, the first the ill-fated hero, the second his meeting with the maiden (Senta) who is to redeem him from the curse resting upon him, and the third the self-sacrifice of Senta, and the consequent salvation of the Dutchman. For the episodic incidents of the drama, readers may be referred to the libretto itself.

The "Flying Dutchman" was first produced at Dresden, under the direction of the composer himself, in 1843; and, after a recent visit to Bayreuth, it was most interesting to compare and contrast the Wagner of thirty years ago with the Wagner of the present day. At first sight it would seem as if two works could hardly be more unlike than *Der Fliegende Holländer* and *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. In the former we find abundance of concerted music, in the latter scarcely any; in the former the various numbers of the work are mostly detached, and we find airs, duets and choruses much as in an opera of Mozart's; while, in the latter, one piece runs on continuously into another throughout an entire act, and, in the *Rheingold*, throughout a whole drama; in the former the melody is of the conventional form, with a very large predominance of four-bar rhythms; in the latter we find the *unendliche Melodie* so difficult, nay, often so impossible, to separate into its component parts. And yet, with all these important differences, no one who is tolerably familiar with Wagner's music can fail to perceive that in the earlier work are to be seen the germs of every one of those innovations which make the Bayreuth Tetralogy so different from everything that has preceded it. True, the composer has not

carried out his own theories to their logical issue; he has in more than one number made concessions to public taste which now he would certainly repudiate; such, for example, as the double cadenza at the end of the slow movement of the great duet between Senta and the Dutchman in the second act, or the occasional repetitions of the text for the sake of musical rather than dramatic effect. But we see here throughout the work an early instance of Wagner's masterly employment of *Leitmotive*, of which the opera contains several: we meet with examples of his strikingly novel and abrupt harmonic transitions—such as the remarkable modulation from A-major to G-minor in Senta's ballad (Act II.)—nay more, we find passages in which purely musical beauty is sacrificed for the sake of dramatic appropriateness. Such is especially the case in the Dutchman's first song, "How oft I th' ocean's deepest gloom." Yet, on the whole, the difference of style between "The Flying Dutchman" and *Lohengrin* is even greater than that between *Lohengrin* and the *Ring des Nibelungen*.

If there were any present in the Lyceum, on Tuesday evening, who still believe the often refuted but hardly less often repeated calumny that Wagner cannot write melody, they must, if capable of appreciating melody at all, have been considerably astonished. The work absolutely abounds in "pretty tunes." In the first act, the second subject of the overture, the Steersman's song, and the whole duet between Daland and the Dutchman; in the second act, the celebrated spinning chorus, Senta's ballad, and the final duet; and in the third act, the Sailors' chorus, and Erik's song, "Is that fair day no more by thee remembered?" are overflowing with melody; and many other pieces might be named which, though less popular in style, and perhaps less attractive, are hardly inferior in real beauty. A curious and interesting point with regard to the melody is the coincidence in rhythm between the chief subjects in the great duet between Senta and the Dutchman in the second act, and those in the duet between Elsa and Lohengrin, in the third act of *Lohengrin*. As there is very little resemblance between the dramatic situations, this coincidence is probably due to the fact that the poetry of both scenes is written in the same metre—the decasyllabic verse.

A few words will suffice to speak of the performance, though a column would hardly do more than justice to Mr. Rosa's exertions in presenting so difficult a work in so thoroughly satisfactory a manner. The part of the Dutchman was splendidly sung and acted by Mr. Santhey, while Mlle. Torriani, as Senta, could hardly have been surpassed. The part is one of her best, which is no mean praise. Mr. Packard was very satisfactory as Erik, but Mr. A. Stevens, as Daland, seemed scarcely to possess a sufficiently powerful voice for the part, being in places overweighed both by the orchestra and by those who were singing with him. The small parts of Mary and the Steersman were excellently given by Miss Lucy Franklin and Mr. J. W. Turner. The orchestra was, as it always is, perfection, and the chorus singing was most admirable, especial praise being due to the elaborate double choruses which open the third act. The whole performance was one reflecting the highest possible credit on Mr. Rosa.

(From the London "Sporting Dramatic News.")

The opera has been several times repeated by the Carl Rosa Opera Company, and is performed by them in the most complete and satisfactory manner. All musical amateurs are aware that it was written before Wagner had found it politic to conceal his poverty of melodic invention by preaching those new doctrines which have recently been illustrated at Bayreuth; but it contains the germs of his latest theories, and its vocal melodies are to a certain extent subordinate to the claims of its instrumentation. Dismissing the Wagner controversy for the present, let us examine the claims of "The Flying Dutchman" to a high rank among standard musical works. The plot was constructed by Wagner himself, and is founded on Heine's version of the legend, adapted by Heine from Fitzball's drama, which had been founded on an account of the legend printed in *Blackwood's Magazine*. It is customary with Wagner's admirers to extol his libretti, and to give especial praise to his glorification of the female sex, as exhibited in such creations as Senta, Elsa, and Elizabeth. Are these creations really entitled to the admiration with which they are by some persons regarded? Do the women of Wagner realize the pure and lofty ideal which he is said to have

attained? Mr. Jackson, like other uncompromising adherents of Wagner, insists strongly on this assumed fact. In the interesting preface to his English adaptation of *Der Fliegende Holländer*, he says—"We may regard it as a beautiful characteristic of Wagner's creations that woman, this pure, noble, self-sacrificing woman of the future, brings release and joy to man. In *Tannhäuser*, it is the pure, holy love of Elizabeth that calls the erring minstrel from the abode of sensual pleasure to a higher and purer existence; in *Lohengrin*, it is Elsa, the pure maiden, who attracts the Swan Knight from his sunny abode to the warm invigorating embrace of earth; in "The Flying Dutchman" it is the naive, simple, dreamy Senta who, in the immensity of her sympathetic love, sacrifices herself in order to bring release to the sufferer. All Wagner's female creations are but embodiments of the most varied powers of Goethe's 'eternal womanhood,' which draws us ever towards it."

So far as Elizabeth is concerned, it must be observed that she does not rescue Tannhäuser from his sensuality. That loathsome hero is steeped in foul desires up to the end of the piece, and the only indication of repentant feeling is the brief supplication which, in his dying moment, he makes to the spirit of Elizabeth to pray for him. Why Elizabeth dies, how she dies, and in what manner her death can beneficially affect Tannhäuser, is not shown in the drama, which at this point is not merely mysterious, but misty, foggy. We should be sorry to utter "any scandal about Elizabeth," but we fail to see anything to distinguish her from the ordinary run of pious young ladies. Elsa is a much more interesting personage, and in the first two acts of *Lohengrin*, the character is exquisitely conceived and elaborated, but in the third act she breaks the oath which she had sworn to her deliverer, and, with offensive pertinacity, persists in demanding from her husband those particulars of his antecedents which she had sworn she would never ask him to reveal. The littleness of mind and the deliberate perjury which are shown in her inquisitiveness, are not compatible with a lofty ideal, and are justly punished. Senta is equally unacceptable. She certainly displays an immensity of "sympathetic love" for Van Der Decken; but, in doing so, she breaks her plight with her affianced lover, Erik, and behaves in a perfectly heartless manner towards that luckless youth. Here, again, we fail to perceive the realization of ideal purity and goodness. Much praise has been bestowed upon Wagner's employment of Heine's distortion of the old legend, and we have been told to admire the plot in which Van Der Decken is allowed to revisit the land once in every seven years, and is promised release from his miserable existence, so soon as he shall gain the love of a perfectly pure and faithful woman. It is cynically implied that he has vainly sought for such a being, through weary ages, until he meets with the pure and faithful Senta, the quality of whose faithfulness has been exhibited in her perjury towards the honest lover to whom her faith was pledged. Surely this much lauded alteration weakens and vulgarizes the story. We have to picture the Dutchman's visits to land, his many windings, introductions to family circles, invariable jiltings, reembarkations, and periodical returns. He becomes a familiar object in seaport towns—is sketched by artists for illustrated papers—is bantered by the seaside population, and becomes prosaic. The original story is not without ludicrous points, and, considering the kind of vocabulary generally popular among sea-faring men, the condemnation of a Dutch skipper to eternal misery, because he has been "guilty of bad language," seems rather a severe mode of inculcating refinement of manners. Yet the old legend—its leading motive once accepted—is infinitely preferable to the prosaic version adopted by Wagner; and although it may not be suitable for dramatic purposes, there is something terribly appalling in the story of the Phantom Ship, and its wretched commander, doomed to plough the seas forever—shut out from human sympathy—denied the grasp of friendly hands and the music of loving voices—shunned by every ship—driven wherever storms are fiercest—mocked by verdant shores, never to be trodden—unable to cast off the horrible burden of existence, and compelled to sail for ever round the world in hopeless denotation. Surely there is more poetry in the familiar old story than in Wagner's Dutchman, with his periodical arrivals at Wapping, Liverpool, Stockholm, or Havre, in search of a Mrs. Van Der Decken.

The overture is familiar to amateurs, and is an illustration both of the faults and merits of the composer. The instrumentation is masterly, and it con-

tains many impressive and picturesque passages, but it is spoiled at the conclusion by noisy exaggeration. The "Sailors' Chorus," the "Spinning Chorus," Senta's "Legendary Song," the "Steersman's Song," Erick's romance, the duet between Senta and Van Der Decken, and indeed, all the music of the second act may be praised without stint. The long duet in the first act between Dal and Van Der Decken is a tedious forestalling of the kind of music which Wagner now writes, and the third act is by no means equal to the second. The opera cannot be accepted by unprejudiced judges as a worthy companion to such masterpieces as Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Weber's *Der Freischütz*, or Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*. Still, despite its inequalities and defects, it has many claims to admiration, and is evidently the work of a man of genius. As we have already stated, it is admirably performed at the Lyceum Theatre, under the direction of Mr. Carl Rosa, and every musical amateur should avail himself of the opportunity of hearing it."

Mme. Essipoff.

This celebrated pianist, who will make her *début* in Steinway Hall, on Nov. 14, arrived in this city aboard the steamer *Labrador*, of the French line, on Nov. 1. She is a pupil of Mr. Leschetitzky, professor at the Russian Conservatory of Music in St. Petersburg, and arrives here with a great reputation earned in the greatest cities of Europe, before the most competent judges. She is generally admitted to be a greater and more artistic organization than Von Bülow; and it is stated that Rubinstein held her his equal, or, at least, that he expressed himself to that effect. A private letter from London written by one of the most eminent critics of that city states this: "I know the capacity of Mme. Essipoff well. She is a magnificent pianist of the school of Liszt and Rubinstein; far more able than Von Bülow and not nearly so incorrect. She is a most beautiful woman, and full of pluck." Here follows a story showing her presence of mind, which having no reference whatever to her musical accomplishments, finds no place in this paper. Mr. Leschetitzky, her professor, whose father was long and well known himself as a music teacher in Vienna, married his clever pupil, Mlle. Essipoff, who, as it seems, continues her maiden name.

Mme. Annette Essipoff will play the following selections at her three first concerts at Steinway Hall:—First concert—Concerto [Chopin?] in E minor with orchestra; toccata, Bach; minuet, Mozart; gavotte, with variations, Rameau; nocturne, Chopin; Traumeswirren, Schumann; Zur gitarre, Hiller; Alouettes, Leschetitzky; waltz, Rubinstein; fantaisie Hongroise, No. 12, Liszt. Second concert—Concerto in D minor (piano and orchestra), Rubinstein; Prelude and fugue, with chorale, Mendelssohn; Gigue in B flat minor, Bach; sonata in A, Scarlatti; barcarole, étude and waltz, Chopin; nocturne, Field; Ständchen, Schubert-Liszt; étude in D flat minor, Liszt; gavotte, Silas; polonaise in E (piano and orchestra), Weber-Liszt. Third concert (piano and orchestra)—Concerto in G major, Beethoven; concerto in D minor, Henselt; concerto in G minor, Mendelssohn. The magnitude of the programmes referred to will give an idea of the wonderful versatility of the fair pianiste and her confidence in her own powers. Three concertos in one evening are a trying ordeal for any pianist.

M. Vivien, professor of the violin at the Brussels Conservatoire, and a lady singer will support Mme. Essipoff.—*Music Trade Review*.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, NOV. 11, 1876.

Some Sentences from Moritz Hauptmann.

The wise old Cantor of the Thomas-Schule in Leipzig, who died in 1870, in his seventy-seventh year, was a philosopher and thinker, as well as a musician of the most sound and sterling character. His genial nature led him into frequent correspondence with his musical friends; indeed he seems to have put his whole musical life and thought into these familiar letters. Sometimes to be sure they go into such deep metaphysical and almost mystical speculation, or into such intricacies of mathematics,

as to make no very easy reading for the most of us. But in the region of his own Art, these letters are full of the most pregnant observations, the most clear and searching criticism. They abound in sentences of pith and point. Among other topics which occupied his attention were the theories of Wagner, about which, from the time when these theories began to be agitated, the letters contain many apt remarks, sincere, dispassionate and earnest, and well worth considering in this year of "the first Bayreuthiad."

We propose to reproduce a few of them in English,—so far as they will bear translation. They are taken from the little volume recently edited by Dr. Ferdinand Hiller, which contains (by way of supplement to the more copious volumes of correspondence with Hausmann) a series of letters to Spohr and others, besides various extracts, with headings to denote their topics, from letters without name or date. We begin with one of these; it evidently has reference to Wagner's idea of combining the Arts in an Art-work of the Future, and is entitled:

"GESAMMTKUNST."

That is to say *Collective Art*. He says: "I can't conceive the state of mind of certain people, when they come to read such indisputable truth opposed to their crack-brained and shallow dicta.—Have they really faith in their own doctrine? I cannot believe it. What they are after with their sundered arts and their Conjoint Art [*Sonderkünsten*—like the Swiss political term, *Sonder-Bund*,—and *Gesamtkunst*] is utter nonsense,—and shows not the least idea of that development through which things must and will come to pass.—They would have us stick the crown of the tree with all its boughs and twigs into the ground, and let the root grow out. What has unfolded itself must grow together again, must become *one*;—as if this *oneness* had not remained throughout the whole unfolding. But in the Opera, if one and the same person is to be both poet and composer, how is it with the singer, the scene-painter, the dancer, chorus and orchestra? Must all these be able so to enter into the idea of the creator, that they may represent his unitary work? To me the very idea of composing music to one's own poetry is something repugnant; it is like marrying one's self; it lacks contrast for the union out of which a new independent entity may spring; it is and must remain a hermaphroditic sort of business, out of which nothing artistically sound can come."

"When we go away oppressed, tortured, crushed from an Art-work, we can be sure that its creator was no genuine artist, however much he may have flattered himself that he has excited us so much more than the classic masters do. What do I care, after all, for the inconsolable lamentation of a composer? I rather turn away from it, like that lord of the manor who saw a lame and ragged beggar come into his courtyard, and said to his servant: 'John, take a whip and drive the fellow from the yard; the poor beast moves my pity too much!'"

Here is a passage from a letter to Otto Jahn (1855), after reading the first volume of the latter's life of Mozart:

"Our young artists always want to achieve something extraordinary; and therefore nothing ordinary [in the sense of orderly and normal—*ordentlich*] ever comes to pass. The old composers began with the ordinary—i.e., the regular, the orderly,—and so found themselves more surely on the way to doing something extraordinary. Even the greatest men of former times began with making nothing different from what was made in those times by others whom they respected, recognized and honored;

they looked up to them; to-day they mount at once upon their shoulders. Then first of all they built up for themselves a *technique* (in composition), which even with the smallest talents gained more certainty, than you will now find with the exceptionally brilliant. Artists learned first of all their handicraft, their technical profession, in which nowadays our artists to the end have something dilettantish. I do not except one. Who is there now who could make such a thing as the little Mozart Mass in C major, with two oboes, trumpets and tympani? Not Mendelssohn, not Spohr; and that not because it is by Mozart, but only because it is by a finished and complete composer of that time; for I am not thinking of its poetic quality, but of its natural, unsought, sure and certain *make*, in which not the least thing could be changed without the risk of something awkward and uncouth.

"Some of the cleverest of our composers, to be sure, have possessed themselves of a certain *savoir faire*, which is well enough; but it is rather their own private mark, by which they may be recognized at once, and which no one else can do in the same way without becoming a plagiarist. This is not what I referred to in what I said of the C major Mass; that was no modes or styles of speech, that was speech in itself. It is hardly a good fortune for a young composer to form himself in times like our's, in an atmosphere, or *vapor-sphere*, as we Germans translate it, such as now surrounds us. *No one learns to write purely: how are impure and unwholesome thoughts to seek and find a pure expression?*

"But is it not in the highest degree untrue, when a nonsensical young blockhead seeks to pour out his deep sorrows, though with a mere C and G-major chord he might express all that he has the nature to feel? Goethe says somewhere: 'It is easy to speak when one has nothing to say.' That may be true, therefore it is well to learn to speak, before we have anything to say which is hard to express; only not with modes of speech, but with natural and simple words, without 'notwithstanding,' 'nevertheless,' or 'to be sure,'—terms which childlike speech never uses, any more than it would all the harmonic, enharmonic and un-harmonic, un-melodic mistiness of our unchildlike musical youngsters. With unclear harmony goes unclear rhythm *pari passum*; indeed it is intrinsically one with it. The sense for sound, intelligible measure is as rare as for sound harmony; one hears rhythymical groups and phrases, but no intelligible periods. If we could only translate such absurdities into some other visible or tangible form, the artistic nothingness of such practices could not fail to be obvious even to the narrowest understanding."

Here is more in the same spirit,—rather a long-spun and complicated German sentence, but, to keep its flavor, we try to translate it as literally as we can:—

"I confess I find the least possible of mannerism in Mozart. But when such originals appear as our newest composers, who conduct themselves so altogether otherwise than other poor mortal children, who are in all and everything *apart*, who seek the true everywhere only in the new, and want to free us from what is only a chain to them, in their unorganic After-Art nature, but what is our freedom, for which they magnanimously offer to bestow on us their own subjective, penned up, unfree personality,—a poor, meagre speciality, instead of the whole overruling divine-human spirit of the universe, as it has expressed itself in all ages through the inspired mouth of divinely gifted men to the understanding of all, not too high for the least, not too little for the highest,—then we feel that with them *all* is manner, for everything exceptional is mannerism and *Philisterei* as well. All that is easily imitated. The color of the human skin is an undistinguishable union or blending of yellow, blue and red; and one over whom the dear God had not drawn such a skin, would find it very difficult to color himself humanly; at least the greatest painters have great pains in bringing out the color truly, and very few succeed. With a parrot or a goldfinch, which have their variegated colors side by side so nicely separated, the coloring is an easier matter; and if it would not be so easy, on account of stature and some other circumstances, to make one's self, by means of color, into a parrot or a goldfinch, since man, while he has two legs like a bird, yet has no feathers, yet surely there would be fewer difficulties in becoming strikingly like a baboon with a red and blue snout by daubing on the colors out of any pots you please."

—So much for the present. There is enough in it to ruminate upon for one short spell; perhaps our young men of "the Future" will not find it altogether easy of digestion; yet it may do them good.

Concerts.

ERNST PERABO. The first two Matinées of Mr. Perabo were eagerly attended, the Wesleyan Hall being filled to repletion, and gave generally great satisfaction. We were accidentally kept from attending the first (Oct. 27), of which we have before given the programme. All the critics unite in praise of Prof. Paine's Sonata in B minor, for Piano and Violin, and testify that it improved upon a second hearing.

The second Matinée (Friday, Nov. 3) had, we thought, the fault of too great length, and of taxing the attention with rather too many altogether new works between the Preludes and Fugues of Bach (from the "Well-tempered Clavichord," Books 1 and 2, in C major), with which he opened, and the Beethoven Quartet for Piano and Strings, op. 16, arranged by Beethoven from the Quintet. The latter, though a long piece, was a great refreshment after the four new works. It cost no strain to listen and surrender one's self without reserve to such fresh, genial music, making that perfect unity of impression which the real masterworks of Art are sure to do. The Quartet was most admirably played, both on the part of Mr. PERABO, and of Messrs. LITZMAN, BELZ and HARTDEGEN, of the Philharmonic Club. It is indeed very rarely that we listen to so pure a reproduction of a classic work. The Bach pieces were very nicely, clearly rendered by the concert-giver.

Of the new works, the one of most pretension, and the best, was the third Trio, in A minor, op. 155, by Raff. Indeed we found more in it to interest us, than we are wont to find with Raff. The first movement, *Allegro agitato*, to be sure, did not entirely carry us away, and it reminded us too often of his "Lenore" Symphony. The Scherzo (*Allegro assai*) is bright and full of grace and delicacy. The *Adagio* has a quaint, ballad-like melody, followed by several ingenious and rather captivating variations, in which the 'cello, violin and piano become by turns the leading instrument, and have enough to do; it needs not to be said they did it well. The *Allegro* Finale, with *Larghetto* prelude, was brilliant and exciting, making fit climax to the whole.—Then followed a *Berceuse* by Rubinstein (op. 50, in B minor), a piano work, arranged for string quartet by Perabo; it was delicate, but we think we had rather hear it in the original form. A new work by Paine, *Romanza* and Scherzo, for Piano and 'Cello, op. 27, made quite a pleasant impression, especially the Scherzo, though hardly a work of so much mark as his Sonata Duo.—There were fresh, bright things, too, in the "Novelette and Melodie," op. 22, by Xaver Scharwenka, a new name to us.

Miss IRA WELSH's Concert, at Mechanic's Hall, last Saturday evening, drew a select and numerous audience and proved a highly agreeable occasion. This was the programme:

1. Quartet.....Fidelio.....Beethoven.
2. Air with Violin Obligato. Il Sogno.....Mercadante.
Dr. Bullard and Mr. Aug. Fries.
3. Romance.....Marie Stuart.....Niedermeyer.
Miss Ita Welsh.
4. Sonata, F. Maj., Op. 8 for Piano-forte & Violin. Grieg.
Messrs. B. J. Lang and Aug. Fries.
5. Duet.....Contralto and Tenor.....Spohr.
Miss Ita Welsh and Dr. Langmaid.
6. Cavatina.....Qui la voce.....Bellini.
7. Song.....The Hidalgo.....Schumann.
8. Piano-forte Solos.....a Prelude.....Bach.
b Caprice.....Widor.
c Gavotte (Arr. by C. Saint-Saëns).....Hach.
9. Song.....Out on the Rocks.....Sainton-Dolby.
Miss Ita Welsh.
10. Quartet.....Oberon.....Von Weber.

The opening Quartet (the *Canon* from *Fidelio*) was nicely sung by the four vocalists above named; and so was the breezy spirited and florid Quartet from *Oberon*, which made a capital close to the promiscuous programme. Miss Welsh's voice has lost none of its sweetness, and has rather gained in evenness and firmness, though the quality at times is still a little childlike. She sang the very Italian melody by Niedermeyer with great tenderness of expression; and gave in response to an encore a more original Rossini-like little ballad melody, dreamy and sad, which might have been from *Oello* or from *Concetta*. The Sainton-Dolby song was sung, too, with much pathos. But perhaps the most beautiful thing sung at all, and very beautifully sung, was the Duet by Spohr. Mrs. SMITH was in fine voice and sang the florid *Qui la voce* more effectively (hardly like the Lind that first night in Castle Garden!) than she did a Franz Song for an encore. Dr. LANGMAID's singing was altogether artistic and delightful, both in the Spohr Duet, and the Quartet, and in Schumann's "Hidalgo," which he gave with a great deal of spirit; only the tempo was a trifle fast. Dr. BULLARD sang, as he always does, with intelligence and refinement. The accompan-

iments were played with certainty and good discrimination by Mr. ARTHUR FOOTE. The Sonata-Duo by Grieg, and the short piano solos, were pleasing contributions both in matter and in execution.

HARVARD SYMPHONY CONCERTS. Of the opening concert next week. The second programme, for Nov. 23, is as follows:

PART I. Overture to "Lodoiska," *Cherubini*; *Scena and Romanza*, from the "Huguenots," *Meyerbeer* (Dr. S. W. LANGMAID); Overture: "The Hebrides," *Mendelssohn*; Songs.—**PART II.** Seventh Symphony, *Beethoven*.

In the third concert (Dec. 7) Miss JULIA RIVE, the young pianist of Cincinnati, who has become so highly distinguished, but who has never appeared yet in New England, will play the C minor Concerto of Beethoven and the second *Rhapsodie Hongroise* by Liszt.—Mr. LEONHARD will play the F minor Concerto of Chopin in the fourth concert, Dec. 21.

THE first THOMAS Concert, on Monday evening, offers a first and varied programme. For Overtures, *Tannhäuser* and *Oberon*; for Piano with Orchestra, Liszt's arrangement of the Schubert Fantaisie in C, op. 15, played by Mr. Wm. H. Sherwood, who for solos will also play a Fugue (E minor) by Handel, a Nocturne by Chopin, and his own Capriccio, op. 4. For vocal solos, Miss Henrietta Beebe sings Mendelssohn's Concert Aria, "Infelice" and English ballads; Mr. M. W. Whitney sings Beethoven's "In questa tomba" and a couple of Scandinavian songs. For novelties, the orchestra is to play an Adagio and Scherzo from the "Frithjof" Symphony by Hofmann; "Nachtgesang," by Voigt, and "Sicilienne," by Boccherini (Strings alone); and the second Hungarian Rhapsody by Liszt. The other concerts follow on Wednesday evening, Saturday afternoon, and Monday and Wednesday evenings of the following week.

Mrs. and Mrs. Wm. H. SHERWOOD, pianists, propose giving a series of five piano recitals, the first to take place about the middle of November next, in which are to be brought out a great variety of choice works for two pianos, piano solos and duets. Nearly or quite all of the following composers will be represented: Scarlatti, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, Henselt, Tausig, Von Bülow, Moscheles, Brahms, Weitzmann, Rheinberger, Thalberg, Rubinstein, Kullak, Reinecke, Raff, Wagner, Gustav Schumann, Bargiel, Dupont, Raff, Grieg, Jensen, Wm. Mason, Rufer, Maas, Moszkowski, Von Weber, Roche, Sherwood and others. Mr. Geo. L. Osgood and other prominent artists will assist. Mr. Wm. H. Sherwood has made a most successful debut at the Thomas concerts in New York, of which the N. Y. press speak in highest terms of praise. He is to appear in the month of November in a succession of Theo. Thomas's concerts, beginning in Philadelphia. Subscription lists will shortly be placed in the music stores for the series.—*Orpheus*.

Music in New York.

Nov. 4, 1876. Steinway Hall was crowded on the night of the first Symphony Concert, Oct. 28th, when Mr. Thomas offered the following programme:

Symphony, No. 8, in F.....Beethoven.
Fantaisie in C. Op. 15.....Schubert.
Adapted for piano and orchestra by Liszt.
Dramatic Symphony, "Romeo and Juliet," Op. 17.
Berlioz.

Orchestra, Chorus and Solos.

The Eighth Symphony contains none of the bold and ambitious conceptions which mark the fifth and the seventh of the immortal series; nevertheless it is instinct with genius, the various Motets containing nothing commonplace or stale, and developed and combined by the hand of a master spirit whose touch gives life and breath to every theme. The Symphony received the most delicate and refined treatment at the hands of the orchestra to which the *Allegretto* is exceptionally familiar through frequent repetition at the garden concerts.

Schubert's great Fantasia was played by Mme. Madeline Schiller with her accustomed brilliancy and accuracy, but not with entire clearness, some of the rapid passages being blurred by unskilful use of the loud pedal. The poetic spirit of the piece was finely developed; and the lyrical cry of the "Wanderer" theme being very effective. The composition is dramatic in a high degree, but lacking in

unity. The orchestral setting is particularly happy and the orchestra was perfection itself.

The *Romeo and Juliet* Symphony is best defined in the words of the great critic who was its composer.

"There cannot be any misunderstanding as to the nature of this work. Although voices are often employed in it, it is neither a concert-opera nor a cantata, but a symphony with choruses.

If the voices are introduced almost at the outset, it is in order to prepare the mind of the hearer for the dramatic scenes about to be illustrated by the orchestra, as also for the sake of the gradual musical development of the choral masses, whose too abrupt entrance might detract from the unity of the work. Thus the Prologue, in which, as in Shakespeare's play, the chorus indicates the action, is recited by but fourteen voices. Afterwards, we hear (behind the scenes) the chorus of Capulets (men) only; later, in the funeral ceremony, the Capulets, both men and women. At the opening of the Finale we have the two entire choruses of Capulets and Montagues, and Friar Laurence; at its close, the three choruses combined.

This last scene of the reconciliation of the two families belongs strictly in the domain of the opera or the oratorio. It has never, since Shakespeare's time, been represented on any stage; but it is too beautiful, too musical, and too well adapted to crown a work of this kind for the composer to think of treating it otherwise.

If in the celebrated "balcony" and "graveyard scenes" the dialogue of the two lovers, Juliet's "asides" and Romeo's passionate outbursts, are not sung, if in fine the duets of love and despair are given to the orchestra, the reasons for this are numerous and evident. First—what alone would suffice to justify the composer—because it is the case of a symphony, not of an opera. Again, as duets of this kind have been vocally treated a thousand times and by the greatest masters, another kind of setting was attempted, from prudence and as a matter of curiosity. Moreover, the very sublimity of this love rendered its representation so hazardous for the musician that he had to give to his imagination a latitude which the positive sense of the words sung would not have admitted, and to recur to instrumental language, a language which is richer, more varied, less determinate, and, by its very vagueness, incomparably more effective for the present purpose."

The work was admirably rendered; the soloists being Miss Antonia Henne, Mr. Geo. Werrenroth, and Mr. Franz Remmert. A.A.C.

WORCESTER, MASS. The *Spy*, Oct. 28, has the following report, with programme, of Mr. B. D. Allen's "Evenings with the Musicians." It will be seen that Rossini's *Pro Peccatis* is set down as "an amusing composition"; if this be a typographical blunder, it shows that chance can be ironical.

The subject of Mr. Allen's lecture in the Music School course last night was Catholic Church Music, and was listened to by the usual intelligent audience which is drawn to Plymouth chapel on the occasion of these Evenings with the Musicians. Musical illustrations formed a prominent feature of the lecture, Mr. Allen's descriptions and suggestions serving to give his hearers a clear understanding of the compositions performed. The programme included selections from Flemish, Italian and German composers in chronological order, as follows:

Flemish.

Canon, by Wm. Dufay, about the year 1400, sung by a chorus numbering eighteen.

Canon, composed for Louis XII. of France, by Josquin des Pres in 1445-1521, a laughable affair.

Ave Maria, by Jacques Arcadelt in 1550, a solo very finely rendered by C. R. Hayden.

Italian.

Hymn, Alla Trinità Beata, unknown composer in 14—, a quartet by Mrs. J. Stewart Brown, Mrs. Wm. Spaulding, and Messrs. Gassette and B. T. Hammond.

Sentence, We Adore Thee, Giovanni Palestrina, in 1514-1594, chorus.

The Eighth Psalm, Benedetto Marcello in 1680-1730, a chorus, Miss Mary Beebe taking the solo.

Quis est homo (Stabat Mater), Emanuel Astorga in 1681-1736, a duet by Misses Ellie Sumner and Alice Prouty.

Solo, from the 31st Psalm, G. V. Pergolesi in 1710-1736, by Mrs. A. C. Monroe.

Requiem Aeternam, Luigi Cherubini in 1760-1842, chorus.

Pro Peccatis from *Stabat Mater*, Gioacchino Rossini in 1792-1868, an amusing (!!) composition, sung by Mr. B. T. Hammond.

German.

Gloria, from the Imperial Mass, Joseph Haydn in 1732-1809, a quartet and chorus in which Misses Sumner and Munger, and Messrs. N. Bacon and Hammond sang.

Tuba Mirum, from the Requiem, W. A. Mozart in 1756-1792, sung by Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Munroe, Messrs. Hayden and Hammond.

Sanctus, from Deutsche Messe, Franz Schubert in 1797-1828, a beautiful composition, sung by a male chorus.

Offertory, Alma Virgo, J. N. Hummel in 1778-1837, the solo by Mrs. J. Stewart Brown.

Mrs. J. Stewart Brown, the principal soloist of the evening, sang all her music in the most satisfactory manner, and the concert was exceedingly interesting throughout. Mr. Allen gave, in the course of his lecture, a pleasant tribute to the merit of the work of our home composers, Messrs. Morrison, Stearns and Dana.

PHILADELPHIA. The last nights of October were the last of the Kellogg English Opera at the Academy of Music. Miss Kellogg herself, Mme. Julie Rosewald, Mrs. Zeld Seguin, Mr. Maas, Mr. Conly, and Mr. Peakes took part in Meyerbeer's "Star of the North."

During last week the last Centennial Musical Festival Concerts were given, under the direction of Theodore Thomas, with the aid of the Women's Centennial Chorus (400 voices); Mrs. H. M. Smith, and Miss Emma Thursby, Sopranos; the Swedish Lady Quartette of singers; Mr. M. W. Whitney, Basso; Mr. Jarvis and Mr. Sherwood, pianists, Mr. Jacobsohn, violinist, and the Thomas Orchestra.—Of one feature in the closing programme the *Evening Bulletin* asks:

Is it really true that the Centennial authorities propose to make the blunder of introducing "America" into the musical programme of the closing day? It is so announced, though not officially. "America" is the misnomer which some misguided Yankee plastered over "God Save the King!" some years ago, when a pious parody of that famous national song of Great Britain was launched upon the singing schools of New England. "God Save the King!" or "the Queen!" as it now is, is a noble choral, known to everybody, the world round, as loyal England's national song, and its adoption as a semi-national air in this country, under the pseudonym of "America," is "flat burglary," and certainly should not be countenanced on such an imposing occasion as the Centennial Closing Day. It does not belong to us, and it would be in shockingly bad taste to parade our larceny of it before our British guests on this occasion.

We do not need to go abroad for national songs, wherewith to close the Exhibition. A couple of stanzas of the "Star Spangled Banner," transposed into a low key to avoid the highest range of the melody, would be sung with splendid effect by any American assemblage. And our new national song, "Whittier's Hymn," especially if slips of the words were distributed through the crowd, would be sung with almost equal effect. The air is already widely familiar, and supported by the organ, orchestra and chorus, it would be a far nobler expression of the people's patriotism, and far more appropriate to the occasion, than the "America," which is not "America," but a mere parody purloined from our British brethren, to whom alone it belongs.

CINCINNATI. The promise of musical events in Cincinnati for the season of 1876-7 is not at this moment particularly brilliant. However, there is no danger of a dearth in that direction. Our home societies are too active and enterprising to permit the reputation of Cincinnati as a musical centre to wane, or the people to want for entertainment of the highest kind. The Harmonic Society is hard at work, under Mr. Singer's direction, and will doubtless do a large share to enliven the winter, while at the same time keeping alive the interest which is already felt in regard to the great musical festival for 1878. The Cincinnati Orpheus will give entertainments this year in Saenger Hall on the following dates: Nov. 5th and 19th, Dec. 3d and 17th. The Cincinnati Orchestra will be considerably strengthened for the winter season, and at least as much is expected of it as its past history justifies. Of the tuneful travelling stars, Kellogg, Belocca, and the Carlberg Opera Company at least will visit us, the latter with the "Flying Dutchman" as the attraction. Local concerts by prominent members of the profession are already promised in cheerful abundance. Signors Jannotta and Alfisi will both offer operatic entertainment by home talent. Mr. Armin Doener announces a series of chamber concerts, and Messrs. Singer, Andres, and Pallat will doubtless resume their delightful and very successful musicals of last year.—*Church's Musical Visitor.*

NEW YORK. The *Tribune's* critic, still all aglow with the Bayreuthian baptism, tells us in last Saturday's paper:

The last rehearsal of the New-York Philharmonic Society for its first concert took place yesterday afternoon,

when Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and the first act of Wagner's "Die Walküre" were given. The Symphony was not well played. There was great want of finish: almost throughout—the strings were ragged and scratchy, and the brass very often out of time, sometimes out of tune. This may of course have been because this was only the first time of rehearsing the work, but it is difficult to see how Dr. Damrosch can get his men well enough in hand to give a very creditable performance to-night. However, the rendering of the Wagner music made amends for any shortcomings in the Symphony. The music itself, in the first place, is extremely beautiful—anything much more beautiful, indeed, it is hard to imagine—and its performance by both orchestra and soloists was extremely creditable. In this work Dr. Damrosch shows what he can do with the orchestra if he takes the time. The concert, which takes place at the Academy to-night, will be extremely interesting, in many respects extremely good, and it is one which no one who is desirous of learning about this new and wonderfully beautiful music of Wagner's can afford to miss.

DECENT AND INDECENT OPERA. The brilliant opening of a season of English opera at the Philadelphia Academy of Music deserves congratulatory notice, especially as it follows immediately a dismal failure of the black-guard French opera on the same stage. The attendance at the French performances fell off to almost nothing, last week. This week has opened with one of the largest and most fashionable audiences the theatre can hold, attracted to hear a not very great performance of an English version of an old and hackneyed Italian opera. But the music is good, the story is decent and the artists behave like gentlemen and ladies; and it is a good sign when these features of a performance at the Academy are appreciated.

The rage for black-guard opera, politely called *opera bouffe*, which prevailed among the stockholders and other habitués of the Academy of Music a few years ago, cannot be accounted for any more than can other forms of morbid appetite, or mania, or disease, which occasionally appears even in the best society. But there was such a rage, and it led to immense success for the prima donna of the first *opera bouffe* season, who was the ugliest and vulgarst woman that ever was allowed to take a leading part on the Academy stage, she who had neither voice nor method to commend her as a singer. Her insolent, audacious indecencies, however, somehow attracted the people of the time, and young girls and boys were taken to see and hear her, and were taught to think her performances were fine examples of the high art that is taught in academies of music. A good many fallen characters and tainted reputations of the present day may be dated from the season, not many years ago, when the ingenuous youth of Philadelphia took their first lessons on the subject of Parisian licentiousness in the Academy of Music of Philadelphia during the seasons of *opera bouffe*.

But the epidemic is over; the mania is at an end. The opera bouffe no longer pays at an expensive theatre. The black-guardism has lost all the charm of novelty, and its results have alarmed some of the fathers and mothers who used to delight in it. So the attendance in the late season was so small as to discourage managers from bringing their companies hereafter to such a house, or to any above the level of the lower-class "variety" theatre, where they may find an appropriate and prosperous home. And immediately following the demonstration of this fact, comes a confirmation of it in the shape of an immense success for the Kellogg English opera troupe, which has at least the one great merit of being decent. Society gains considerably when the decent becomes more fashionable than the indecent.—*Evening Bulletin, Oct. 17.*

FEMALE VIOLINISTS. There has been no lack of lady violinists. On the painted roof of Peterborough Cathedral, an edifice said to have been built in 1194, there is depicted a female figure seated, and holding in her lap a sort of viol with four strings and four sound holes, indicating, it would seem, that in early ages ladies sometimes played the violin. Among the accounts of King Henry VII. for Nov. 2nd, 1495, we find the item: "For a woman that singeth with a fiddle, two s." Anne of Cleves, after her divorce, amused herself with playing a viol with six strings; and from a ballad of the time of Charles I., we may infer that it was not then accounted extraordinary for ladies to play the fiddle:—

"She sings and she plays,
And she knoweth all the keys
Of the viol di gamba and lute."

Maddalena Lombardi, who came from Venice, produced a great sensation as a violinist in 1735, at Paris. Regina Schirk was a famous violinist in 1743; Mozart said of her, "No human being can play with more feeling." In 1788, Signora Vittoria dall'Oca played publicly on the violin in the theatre at Milan. Signora Varravieini, born in 1780, at Turin, was a violinist of considerable reputation, and enjoyed the special favor of the Empress Josephine. Louise Gautherot, a French woman, was celebrated for the violin performances which she gave in London, from 1780 to 1786. In 1811 Signora Gerbini performed on the violin, in Paris. In 1835 Mad. Filipowicz, the wife of a Polish Colonel, played the violin at the London Philharmonic Concerts. We are told that those who came to laugh remained to admire. The names of Krahmen, Schultz, Newman, Humler, and Vittoria de Buono are those of renowned female violinists. Many will remember the *Arise* produced in 1840, and later, by the sisters Milanese. Mad. Norman-Neruda is professor of the violin in the Academy of Stockholm; and to this list of lady violinists must be added the names of Camilla Urso and Miss Collins.

Special Notices.

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE LATEST MUSIC, Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

Take this Message to my Darling. D-minor. Dulcken. 40
4. d to F.

"Tell her in the gentlest whisper,
That in death I bless her name."
Full of pathos and expression.

They are beckoning me. Song and Chorus. Lyle. 30
Eb 3. d to F.

"Nearer, nearer comes the music,
Since the early dawn of day."
Of that beautiful kind that always pleases.

Little John Bottlejohn. Eb 3. F to G. Fernald. 30

"And there on a rock sat the little mermaid.
And she was singing so fine."

A pretty and humorous narration of L. J. B's affair with the little sea-maiden, with whom he descended to the region where Dives lives, and where he has doubtless become an old salt.
She loved me in Life's Summer time. G. 3. Keens. 30
d to E.

"And from their depths a perfume sweet
Steals o'er my spirit like a prayer."
Very sweet, every way.

Angels wanted her in Heaven. Song and Chorus. G 3. c to E. Lyle. 30

"There this flower of earth must lie,
The angels plucked it in its bloom."
Mournful, beautiful words, and sweet music.

The Sailor's Grave. 4 F. F to a. Sullivan. 50

"But the gallant fleet shall proudly steer,
And warrious shout above thee."
A gallant tribute to a brave sailor. A good concert song for a hearty voice.

I'm feeling like a Big Bull-Frog. A. 3. Tony Pastor. 35
E to E.

"But I never can forget Aleene,
Sitting on a sewing machine."
Fine portrait of the frog, and grotesquely sentimental ballad.

A plain Te Deum. Eb 3. E. to F. Tattem. 30

Two pages of Chants, with Soprano and Tenor solos. We need many Te Deums for a change, and this is simple and sufficiently brief.

Instrumental.

Star of Empire March. G 3. Goerdeler. 35

Quite powerful, yet elegant in structure.

Legends. (Tonstuck). D. 3. Lange. 35

One of Lange's tasteful pieces. Fine practice.

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A simple and pretty transcription.

Emma Polka. D 2. Bergerdahl. 30

Pretty piece for learners.

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" 2. Contrabandista. By Sullivan.

" 3. Cox and Box. "

3 neat novelties which will please those who have a violinist in the family. Perhaps 3 would exerce the difficulty.

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Light, fluttering arpeggios which suggest the erratic flight of the pretty insect.

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Bright waltz. (not set of waltzes) with a certain unusual richness in its brilliancy.

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One of a fine set for advanced players.

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Vol. 1. No. 8. Service Prelude, in G. Muller

Romanza. Dussek

Two Responses. Battman

Service Prelude, in F.

About 3. Fugue. Rink

In Memoriam. Spark

Service Prelude in F. Heise

March Heroique. No. 1. Schubert \$1.25

ABBREVIATIONS.—Degrees of difficulty are marked from 1 to 7. The key is denoted by a capital letter, as C, Bb, etc. A large Roman letter marks the lowest and the highest note if on the staff, small Roman letters if below or above the staff. Thus "C, G, c to E" means "Key of C, Fifth degree, lowest letter, c on the added line below, highest letter, E on the 4th space."

